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# CHARACTERISTICKS:

A

## DIALOGUE.

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*Ego autem neminem nomino ; quare irasci mihi nemo poterit,  
nisi qui ante de se voluerit confiteri.*

Cicero pro Leg. Man.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for CHARLES CORBETT, at *Addison's Head*, against  
St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet-Street. M DCC XLI.

Price One Shilling.

CHARACTERISTICS

DIALOGRAPH



J. O. W. D. O. W.

Printed for George Constable, at the University Press, Cambridge.  
The Cambridge University Press, 1936.  
The Cambridge University Press, 1936.





T O T H E  
P U B L I S H E R.

*Mr. CORBETT,*



HOUGH I have no personal Acquaintance with you, yet, as I am recommended to you as a Publisher by a Friend, I have sent you the inclosed to publish: But, lest you should think it of too dangerous a Nature, I think it proper to acquaint you, that the Blank Names are of two Sorts: First, Such as begin and end with a Letter, have a Meaning: Secondly, such as consist of one Letter with a Dash, or of a Dash only, have no Meaning at all. You may perhaps ask, Why I should write without a Meaning? That I can answer to your Satisfaction, and to the World's.

First then; I know by Experience, that without Dashes and Blanks, no Poem, let it have never so great Merit, if it has not a very great Name to recommend it in the Title-Page, can sell; and as I have no Name or Reputation in Poetry, I be-thought myself of a Method of supplying both, by a reasonable Number of Blanks and Dashes.

Secondly,

To the PUBLISHER.

Secondly, you, yourself, Mr. *Corbett*, must be sensible, that this Poem, without the unmeaning Dashes, never could have swell'd to the Size of a Shilling; and you know that one Shilling Pamphlet is better than two Sixpenny ones, and there's more to be got by it.

But to make you quite easy as to the Dashes, I have look'd over the Lists of all our Great Men, and have made choice of such Letters as it is impossible can fit any Man in *England*, whose Name, Title, or Surname, begins with that Letter. This I have been so particularly cautious of, that I can defy any Man in *Britain*, without the strongest Perversion of Sense and Characters, to affix any Meaning to them.

*I am, Mr. Corbett,*

*Your most obedient Servant.*







## CHARACTERISTICS:

### P O E M.



A Y S *Juvenal*, "In every Clime, and

State,

"Man is the Author of his own hard

Fate;

"For Good, mistaking and pursuing Ill,

"Thro' erring Judgment, or from partial Will.

"What Wish so fond that, every Labour past,

"Brings not Remorse, Despair, or Shame at last?"

The Lust of Pow'r destroy'd the *Stewart's* Line:

Be ne'er that Lust, O B---f---ick, known to thine.

B

Who

Who sweeps yon Palace-Floor in *ermin'd* Pride,  
 And grasps whate'er his fond Ambition ey'd ?  
 One Morning rank'd among the Liv'ry'd Race ;  
 The next, exalted into Pow'r and Place.

A Third, his blinded Sovereign dies and leaves  
 Full Fifty Million of Mankind his Slaves ;

The next, all *Europe* trembles at his Frown ;  
 Tell me whom Fortune favour'd thus ?---BIRON.

But the *Fifth Act* his Farce of Greatness ends ;  
 Stript of his Pomp, his Flatterers, and his Friends,  
 A Cart, his Court ; his Plate, a wooden Dish ;  
 He falls the heedless Victim of his *Wish* ;  
 He wish'd to be what *Peter* was before,  
 And wanting *Prudence*, he aspir'd to *Pow'r*.

See *Villiers*, rais'd from Rags to Stars and Strings ;  
 The foetid Vapour of the Breath of Kings ;  
 Carest and curst thro' ev'ry Scene of Life,  
 Die unlamented by a Russian's Knife.

FRIEND.

Hold, Poet, hold ; thy rhyming Rage restrain,  
 The World may not, but *P---n* will explain.  
 Fool ! while the Sea of Folly rages fierce,  
 To venture in this batter'd Bark of Verse :

Here



Here Parsons thund'ring with *Charybdis*' Roar;  
 There barking Templers guard their shallow Shore.  
 Here *Depths* of *Dulness*; there the *Shelves* of *Wit*:  
 Midst *those* you founder; and on *these* you split.  
 Besides, can you teach M--n--r or ---  
 Unskill'd in Numbers, yet on Fire to sing?  
 Careless of Wealth, regardless of your Ears,  
 By Q---ns unpension'd, and unpuff'd by P---rs.

Unpractis'd *Genius*, like the Babbler's Tongue,  
 Speak *sometimes* Truth, but *always* times it wrong.  
 Light, empty, founding of the jingling Art,  
 It floats a *Buoy* still pointing on the *Heart*.  
 In short, a *Poet* is a dangerous *Friend*,  
 Farewell--or learn in Time--reform, amend.

## A U T H O R.

Amend--but how? the Spirit works so strong,  
 Some Way or other, I must have my Song;  
 For Court, for Country, for the Bond, or Free;  
 So they but rhyme, 'tis all the same to me.  
 Sooner, the Poor shall B--- Pity bless,  
 Or from D--- the Needy hope Redress;  
 Sooner shall ALGON leave his Hounds and Whore,  
 Or D-- relieve the Wretch he robb'd before,

Ere

Ere rhyming Fits, howe'er the World may scoff,  
Shall haunt my Brain, and I not toss them off.

FRIEND.

Then if thy Rage of Rhiming is so keen,  
Indulge thy Fancy, but repress thy Spleen;  
Alike let public Vice, or-Virtue sleep,  
Nor lash the one, nor o'er the other weep.  
Alike the Statesman and the Patriot be  
Unprais'd, unpunish'd, and unpuff'd by thee.  
The Wind that whispers thro' the bending Boughs,  
And sighs respondent to the Virgin's Woes;  
The Brook that murmurs thro' the peebly Plain;  
The mossy Fount, and *Strephonizing* Swain;  
Themes such as these, shall crown thy Head with  
Bays,

And frosty Maids, and reverend Fops shall praise.

AUTHOR.

Then will I sing of Ages known to Fame,  
When Father, Friend, and Monarch were the same:  
Her graceful Head when decent Freedom, rear'd.  
When Worth exalted, and when Rule endear'd:  
When *Roman* Virtue, without *Roman* Vice,  
Bade *Britain* ripe in every Glory rise,

These



These all shall open to my raptur'd View,  
And *W---le's* Virtues prove the Picture true.

FRIEND.

Or copy Nature, or you're Nature's Foe;  
From *Men*, not *Books*, her striking Touches flow.  
The Muse must sing, to pour her Spirit forth,  
From living Models, and from breathing Worth.  
Then shall her Note each gen'rous Bosom move,  
Where throbs a Pang for Virtue, Fame, or Love.  
When deep-felt Passion strikes the tuneful Strings;  
When Nature whispers, what the Poet sings;  
Then may your Work instructive Song convey,  
And Genius prompt, and Truth direct the Lay.

AUTHOR.

What! neither bite nor fawn--'tis passing hard;  
Who, that *cou'd* be a *Dog*, *wou'd* be a Bard?  
In all yon Crowd, not one believing Fool,  
To snuff the Incense, or to tip the Cole!  
'Tis but to try,--I've read how Verse prevail'd,  
When *Gold*, when *Glory*, and when *Honour* fail'd.

The Man who fills and drains the Public Purse,  
Whose Name, the Mother breeds her Babe to curse;  
Who courts the Vile, the Wicked, and the Mean;  
In Pow'r their *Shelter*, out of Pow'r their *Screen*:

B

Averse

Averse to hear his injur'd Country's Call,  
 But quick to shun the Ruins of her Fall:  
 Sad in her Joy ; in her Distresses gay ;  
 The *public* Robber, and the *private* Prey;  
 Him shall my Lines exalt into a God,  
 And B--'s P--rs and People wait his Nod.

Is there a Man while *Britain* rul'd the Main,  
 Whose Name was branded with a Coward's Stain,  
 With Manners mean as his ignoble Blood,  
 Behe the *Neptune* of the *Br--sh* Flood ?

H--- I'll paint, disdaining private Views,  
 And H--ce Friend to Learning and the Muse ;  
 The F--s strip of foul Corruption's Rags,  
 And W---n shall shine in right of Craggs.  
 I'll shew where T--n's right, and *Barnard* wrong ;  
 And *Wyndham*'s Virtue shall survive in ---

FRIEND.

But where find Virtues for a thousand more,  
 See half a Dozen drains thy scanty Store.

AUTHOR.

Virtues ? Why Vices, Friend will do as well,  
 To *bribe*, is Bounty, *Slavery*, Loyal Zeal.  
*Pensions*, Rewards ; *Hypocrisy* is Grace ;  
*Pollution*, Prudence ; and *Perdition*, Peace.

FRIEND.



FRIEND.

Yet still you're pinch'd, for Thousands will remain,  
Whomust be flatterr'd, or they damn your Strain.

AUTHOR.

For Thousands more I'll coin ten thousand Lies,  
Till Truth herself mistakes the fair Disguise:  
Each Patriot of his *Patriot* Worth I'll strip,  
And in his Spoils a courtly D--nce equip.  
To *Florio*, *Chesterfield* shall lend his Wit,  
And *Carteret's* Learning shall --- fit.  
*E---* in Dignity shall rival *Stairs*,  
And *Cobham's* Courage shall be --- s  
*H---* in Senates shall like *P---* shine,  
And *H---x* enrich *S --- R---* Line.  
*Stentor* shall study for the Publick Weal,  
And *I---s* Language flow with *Talbot's* Zeal.  
*Crassus* I'll dignify with *Carlile's* worth;

FRIEND.

But why forget the Hero of the North?

AUTHOR.

Him in as many thousand Parts I'll split,  
As he has Virtues, and they all shall fit.  
*Milo* shall in his deep Experience share;  
And *C---* match him in the Trade of War.

His

His Soul I'll lavish on unbearded Youth,  
 His Sense on Statesmen, and on P--sts his Truth,  
 See where three C---ps three bearded Matrons  
 rule,

And Posts and Reg--ts pass from Fool to Fool.

AUTHOR.

Soft you forget the Purpose you profess,  
 'Tis mean to lash a Soldier or a Priest ;  
 Both are alike the Messengers of Peace,  
 To strike the Man who must not fight, is base.  
 As Churches, Camps are sacred by their Trade,  
 Harmless alike the Cassock and Cockade.

AUTHOR.

To lash I meant not, for I meant to fawn,  
 On all that's drest in Scarlet or in L---n.

FRIEND.

Yet some in both there are to Virtue train'd,  
 By Courts distinguish'd, yet by Courts unstain'd ;  
*Hartford* a Name that charms the Muses Ear,  
 And *Montague* to every Virtue dear.  
*Cathcart*, whose Mind contains a richer Store,  
 Than all the Climes his vent'rous Arms explore.

To



To *Secker's* Life a Saint may tune his Notes,  
And *H---y's* Virtues cover all his V—tes.

## A U T H O R.

But these, my Friend, require no venal Lays;  
For such reflect, but never borrow Praise:  
Your Poet's Business is, *beneath the Rose*,  
In Verse to *flatter*, all he *hates* in Prose.

Nor *Greece*, nor *Rome*, nor *England* can prefer  
A Name or Hero, but I'll match him here.  
A brainless Head the Fame of *Scipio* fills;  
But *Scipio* was an *Afs* compar'd to ——  
*Leonidas*, you say, was brave and good;  
But what, dear Sir, was he to ——:  
Fame fir'd the Heart, and Sense inform'd the Head  
Of the first *Churchill*, but he yields to ——.

With me in *Peter's* Paths shall *Syphax* tread;  
And *Hough's* fair Mitre beam on *Shylock's* Head.  
As *Moses* meek, shall humble *G---n* shine;  
And *Niger*, *Joseph's* Chastity be thine.]

While dozing o'er yon B—ch, Religion waits,  
And nods at once to Heav'n's and *W---le's* Gates.

## F R I E N D.

Let not so fast thy frantic Numbers roll;  
If not thy Body, yet regard thy Soul:

Religion ev'ry social Bliss improves;  
 True Joy she heightens, and the false removes:  
 Resign'd alike in Triumph and Disgrace,  
 Her Ways all Pleasure, and her Paths all Peace:  
 She claims no Sway, where Passion takes Offence;  
 And curbs no Passion, but to mend some Sense.  
 Alike she works, alike her Influence sheds,  
 O'er humble Lazars, and anointed Heads:  
 Where Saints rejoice, where trembling Sinners fear,  
 Where creeps a Reptile, and where rolls a Sphere.

## AUTHOR.

For Cant like this, the needy Poets Curse,  
 The P——te's Pray'r may bless you — not his Purse.  
 To touch his Coin is all I aim to do,  
 Fame I resign to *Littleton* or you.

Behold seven *Wights* possess yon ample Board,  
 Frequent and full, each answering to *my L---d*;  
 'Tis theirs to bid *Britannia's* Thunders roar,  
 And guide her Conquests on from Shore to Shore.  
 They're *what I name not*, in the Seamen's Stile,  
 In mine, *The Saviours of the British Isle*.

Next will I sing from *Greek* or *Roman* Lines,  
 How o'er the Arts the Sun of Bounty shines.

FRIEND.



## FRIEND.

Stark staring mad! The Stench of Incense raise,  
 From *Ch--w--d's* Judgment, or from *C--r's* Lays!  
 Who wou'd be learn'd, to be by *B---n* priz'd?  
 Who can be witty, if his Wit's excis'd?

The *Greeks* and *Romans* had a Right to Song  
 They valued Science, and they felt it strong.  
 'Twas theirs to stretch the varied Landskip wide,  
 To rear the well-proportion'd Pillar's Pride:  
 To bid the Soul dissolve in Music's Flow,  
 Bid varying Passions o'er the Canvas glow:  
 Elate to Light, bid Sculpture rear the Head,  
 And Life o'er all the melting Marble spread:  
 Then, then, the Muse cou'd rouse to Fame and Death,  
 While a whole raptur'd People felt her Breath.

## AUTHOR.

Then why not sing the Man, and Writers Praise;  
 How much they merit, and how well he pays?  
 Wit to the *Hackney* Parson I'll dispense,  
 To *Freeman* Spirit, and to *Sidney* Sense:  
 In *M---n* the Soul of *Tully* find,  
 And *Dorset's* Bays shall *H---y's* Temples bind:  
 Like *F---g*, *Osburn* joining Strength to Ease,  
 As *Lock* shall reason, and as *Butler* please:

A future Age shall honour *Arnold's* Name,  
And Reverend Politicians live to Fame.

FRIEND.

Struck with the Sound, methinks each awful Shade,  
Whose Name they pilfer, lifts the Patriot Head :  
At *C-m-l Hales* a swinging Cudgel rears,  
And *Sidney* whets a Knife for *M-rl-y's* Ears :  
For *N--c--b's* Nose, O *Hide*, thy Fingers itch,  
And thy Toes, *Freeman*, for COURT EVIL's Breech.  
Lo *Tully*, mindless of the *Forum's* Strife,  
Starts from his Urn, and trembles for HIS LIFE.  
Long *Arnold*, long has felt the sacred Rage,  
Nor Fire nor Floods can purify his Page ;  
Condemn'd to lick, thro' *Walsingham's* Award,  
The Dews distilling from a Statesman's Beard.  
Nor can, O *P--ts*, thy Matron Look foresee  
What Rods fell *Osburn* has in Piss for thee.

AUTHOR.

Then *Britain's* Glory shall exalt my Strain,  
The Pride of Isles, and Mistress of the Main.  
See from yon World her *Vernon's* Glory breaks,

FRIEND.

And see how this her Shame and Sorrow speaks.

On



On one, protected Commerce pours her Stores;  
 And SIX SHIPS ONLY guard a thousand Shores;  
 While every Woe her injur'd Sailor feels  
 On Coasts, whose Length are measur'd by her Keels.

Burning with Rage, yet patient of Disgrace,  
 Spurn'd into War, and bullied into Peace;  
 Oppress'd for Years, the Queen of Ocean lay,  
 Her Strength collecting for one glorious Day.  
 The Day appears --- but still insulting *Spain*  
 Unpunish'd lords it o'er her ample Main:  
 Her Fleets prove backward to inviting Winds,  
 And thirty Ships a Shred of Parchment binds.

## AUTHOR.

But why these bootless Truths; 'tis but by Lyes,  
 In Days like ours, that Poets hope to rise:  
 Who cares to hear what *Gazetteers* can tell?  
 Who loves to read what Infants lisp as well?  
 Make *Fleury* --- *Quadra* --- recommend your Lay;  
 Nor *Spain* must plunder, nor must *France* betray.  
*W*--- must fill the haughty Foe with Fear;  
 Nor when you speak of *N*---, must you sneer.  
*La Hogue* in *Glory* shall to *Portsmouth* yield,  
 And *Hownow's* Trophies darken *Blenheim's* Field.

D

The

The Muse shall *Newberry* more than *Naseby* mark,  
 And find another *Cressy* in *Hyde-Park*.  
*Chagre* shall fall of *Spithead's* Glories short,  
 And *Windsor's* Forest spread o'er *Agincourt*.

FRIEND.

Farewel, my Bard, and ere we meet again,  
 Seek a dark Room --- clean Straw -- and breathe  
 a Vein.

F I N I S.

